THE TENNESSEE WARBLER

Newsletter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

December, 2022 Editor, Theresa Graham

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fall is here, and so are our first winter visitors! Last month, Birding Kingsport hosted a wonderful Fall Meeting. Attendees were able to enjoy some fall migration birds – lots of warblers! – and enjoy dinner with a presentation about birds of Costa Rica given by Paco Madrigal, the founder of Cotinga Tours. Thanks to Birding Kingsport and all those who helped make the Fall Meeting such a success. **I am happy that Nashville will host the Spring Meeting April 28th – 30th**. Please consider attending as TOS continues to grow.

Despite significant decreases in financial markets, TOS remains strong financially. Our memberships remain high. So please look for and welcome any unfamiliar faces at your chapter meetings. Finally, as of this writing (October 28th), Congress is still discussing the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, so if you have not done so already, please reach out to your Representative or to our Senators. You can see an Action Alert on the TOS webpage and can read more details in the previous issue of *The Tennessee Warbler*. Thanks to the Conservation Committee, TOS has recently signed letters to promote the conservation of Greater Sage Grouse and to reduce the introduction of neonicotinoids into the environment through pesticide-coated seeds. I am happy to be part of an organization with so many bright and insightful people who love birds and nature and are working tirelessly to protect habitats for birds, for ourselves, and for future generations.

Enjoy your fall and winter birding!
Warmly,
Michael Collins
President, TOS

2023 TOS SPRING STATE MEETING
NASHVILLE, TENNEESSEE
APRIL 28 – 30, 2023

We are most pleased to announce that the Nashville Chapter of TOS will be hosting the Annual Spring TOS State Meeting! The date is April 28-30, 2023. Specific details are being worked out and we hope to have them posted to the TOS and NTOS webpage in the coming weeks. But for now, here is a sneak peek at what we have planned so far.

The Saturday night reception, April 29th, will be held at the Green Door Gourmet - https://www.greendoorgourmet.com This lovely farm to table venue has ties to TOS, as it is the home of Albert Ganier III and his lovely wife, Sylvia, grandchildren of one of TOS founder's, Albert Ganier Sr. They are excited to share their farm venue with us as well as some of their grandfather's memorabilia. NTOS member Susan Hollyday, will have her famous 100th Anniversary celebration posters on display for all to enjoy during the reception and dinner as well.

We are also most excited and pleased to announce that Noah Stryker (https://noahstrycker.com), ornithologist, 2004 ABA Young Birder of the Year, global Big Year adventurer and author of *Birds without Borders* will be our Keynote speaker on Saturday night. He will also join us on field trips through the weekend.

Morning field trips will take place on the Green Door farm property along the Cumberland River and many other Nashville hot spots. The Saturday afternoon Board of Directors meeting will take place at Bells Bend in the classroom at the Nature Center.

Host hotel & other registration information are being determined and will be announced as soon as finalized. In the meantime, mark your calendars and plan to attend this most special annual meeting!

Cheers!
Cyndi Routledge
NTOS President

THE 2022 STATE OF THE BIRDS

The 2022 State of the Birds for the United States and Canada was released in on October 12, 2022.

Thirty-three science and conservation organizations and agencies contributed to the report. It is the first look at the nation's birds since a sobering 2019 study conducted by Cornell Lab of Ornithology scientist Ken Rosenberg and colleagues found 3 billion birds had been lost from the U.S. and Canada since 1970.

The report finds that more than one half of U.S. bird species are declining, in every habitat except wetlands, where breeding birds are increasing overall. Grassland birds where shown to be the most imperiled. The report found 70 newly identified "Tipping Point Species," defined as those that have declined by 50% or more in the last 50 years and are on track to decline by another 50%, if nothing changes. These include species like Rufous Hummingbird, Prairie Warbler and Ruddy Turnstone.

The report calls for bigger conservation solutions by looking to successful wetland conservation as a model for investments in other habitats; by advancing precision science and conservation to address the causes of decline head-on; and by working at new scales across science, policy and partnership with communities to restore and manage habitats to benefit birds, help with climate resilience, and improve quality of life for people.

A summary of the report can be found here:
https://abcbirds.org/news/2022-state-of-the-birds-press-release/
The full report can be found here:
https://www.stateofthebirds.org/2022/

Sources:
America Bird Conservancy: (https://www.abcbirds.org)
American Birding Association: (https://www.aba.org)
Cornell Lab of Ornithology: (https://www.birds.cornell.edu)

Editor's note: TOS is a member organization of the American Bird Conservancy

CONSERVATION NOTE

The "Migratory Birds of the America's Conservation Enhancement Act of 2022" has been introduced in the United States Congress.

Senators Ben Cardin (D-Maryland) and Rob Portman (R-Ohio) are the co-sponsors of the Senate version (S.4187). Representatives Ron Kind (D-Wisconsin) and Maria Salazar (R-Florida) are the co-sponsors of the House version (H.R. 9135).

The proposed legislation would reauthorize the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, and aims to improve upon migratory bird protections, while increasing overall funding for existing programs.

Updates will be provided as this proposed legislation moves through the Senate and House.

Conservation Policy Committee:

Melinda Welton (Co-chair), Dick Preston (Co-chair), Cyndi Routledge (Member), Laura Cook (Member), Ashley Heeney (Member), Dev Joslin (Special Consultant)

Guidelines for Tennessee Ornithological Society 2023 Conservation and Research Grants

The Tennessee Ornithological Society invites applications for Conservation and Research Grants to support projects that will directly or indirectly help to protect the birds of Tennessee, increase scientific knowledge, or educate others about the importance of Tennessee's birds. A total of $6,000 is available to be awarded for the grants, which may be divided among multiple recipients.

Anyone with a bird-related project, including students, professionals, and individual workers, may compete for a grant. The project may already be in progress at the time of application. Applicants should submit a project proposal using the form that is available on the TOS Website (http://www.tnbirds.org/downloads/GRANT_FORM.doc). Needed information includes: name, address, telephone, E-mail address, topic, problem to be addressed, objectives, expected results and significance, project location, beginning and ending dates, estimated field time, estimated total cost of project, itemized budget, funds available from other sources, how grant is to be used, experience of applicant in the project area, willingness of applicant to share results at a statewide TOS meeting, and whether the work is under the guidance of a mentor or is independent.

A letter of recommendation from a mentor or a knowledgeable associate is strongly encouraged. Up to $50 of a grant may be applied toward the costs of attending an appropriate scientific meeting to present results of the project.

Criteria for judging applications include:
— Significance of problem addressed
— Clarity of proposal
— Adequacy of project design
— Adequacy of experience/training
— Adequacy of professional guidance
— Financial need
— Chance for achieving objectives
— Potential benefit to the species/resource
— Potential for advancing career/studies
— Potential for sharing results at a future statewide TOS meeting

The application and letter of recommendation should be emailed (preferably) or mailed to Michael Collins, Department of Biology, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN 38112; collinsm@rhodes.edu; (901) 843-3557. The deadline for receipt of applications is February 1. Applicants will be notified of the Committee's decisions in early March. All grant awards will be announced in *The Tennessee Warbler.*

Respectfully,

Michael Collins

TOS Conservation and Research Funding Committee Chair

Fall Bird Count Data Due Now

Fall bird count data are due as soon as possible. Please turn your count data in to your count compiler. Please remember to include the following effort data as well:

1 - Hours and miles by car, foot, and any nightbirding

2 - Number of observers and parties

3 - Any feeder watching hours & names

4 - Start and end times for the count

5 - Weather data for the count

6 - Names of all the participants

7 - Anything else about the count, i.e., record high or low numbers, extraordinary weather, all-time species total for your particular count, etc.

As always, TOS thanks the participants and compilers for their efforts in these surveys to help monitor our birdlife. These data are important and your efforts are much appreciated.

Ron Hoff • TOS State Count Compiler
166 Chahyga Way • Loudon, TN 37774 • 865-567-9679
webe2brdrs@gmail.com

MARCH 15TH DEADLINE

The deadline date for the April issue of *The Tennessee Warbler* is March 15th. Please submit all articles, announcements, reports and items of interest by this deadline date.

Submit Material To:
Theresa Graham, Editor
PO Box 366, Oakland TN 38060
(901) 489-0795
e-mail: 2graham@bellsouth.net

Be On the Lookout for Winter Hummingbirds in Your Yard

By Cyndi Routledge

Tennessee has had a few 'one-day' wonders this fall…Western hummingbirds fueling up and continuing on their way. We've also had a few earlier than usual return winter hummingbirds – one second and one third-year Rufous in Paris and Nashville respectively.

So please consider keeping at least one feeder up, and keep watch for any hummingbirds from now until 15 March. If you do spot one, first thing to do is try to get a picture, and then call or email me. Depending on **your location,** one of Tennessee's 3 winter hummingbird banders will then get in touch with you.

I can be reached at routledges@bellsouth.net or 931-206-3517. I band in Middle & West TN, Southern KY, Northern MS. If you're in East TN contact Mark Armstrong at woodthrush@bellsouth.net. He bands east of the plateau in TN and into NC. And finally, we welcome a new bander to TN, Mark Myers. He's a longtime western hummingbird bander that has retired to Tennessee. He can be reached at myersmark7@gmail.com. He covers the greater Chattanooga area and Northern GA area. Anyone of us would love to hear from you about your winter hummingbird and have you and it join our continuing, collaborative winter hummingbird research.

Pictured above is a third-year return female Rufous in Nashville. She was initially banded in November of 2020 as a juvenile bird and has returned to the home of Bill Taylor. You can see her band in the picture.
This bird was also featured in the WildSide Episode on winter hummingbirds that came out earlier this year. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eCVbEAG-FFc

Photo taken by host Bill Taylor.

HOW TO HELP A WINDOW COLLISION VICTIM

The transparency and reflectivity of glass often cause birds to perceive windows as extensions of their habitat. Each year in the United States, up to one billion birds die from collisions with glass. The majority of these deaths occur from windows at private residences.

If you find a bird dazed from a window collision, examine it for external injuries. If the wings are both held properly, neither dangling, and the eyes seem normal, see if it can perch in a branch unassisted. If so, leave it to recover on its own.

If the bird has a noticeable injury, get it to a wildlife rehabilitator as quickly as possible. Broken bones usually need proper attention within minutes or hours to heal properly without surgery. The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency maintains a list of certified wildlife rehabilitators: (https://www.tn.gov.twra.hmtl).

Otherwise, place the bird in a dark container, such as a shoebox, and leave it somewhere quiet, out of reach of pets and other predators, for 15 minutes. If the weather is extremely cold, you may need to take the container inside, but don't keep the bird too warm. Do not try to give it food or water, and resist handling it. The darkness will calm the bird while it recovers, which should occur within a few minutes unless it is severely injured. Do not open the box indoors to check on the bird or it might escape into your house and be hard to get back out.

Take the box outside every 15 minutes or so and open it – if the bird flies off, that's that! If it doesn't recover in a couple of hours, take it to a wildlife rehabilitator. Remember that technically, it is illegal to handle a migratory bird without a permit, and medically helping an injured bird requires training, so your job is just to transport the bird to a rehabilitator.

Source: American Bird Conservancy (https://abcbirds.org).

Editor's note: TOS is a member organization of the American Bird Conservancy

LISTEN UP: IT'S BIRDSONG CALMING!

Listening to birdsong appears to have a positive impact on health and mood, a recent study suggests.

A German team of researchers, led by Emil Stobbe of the Max Planck Institute, probed the effect of urban traffic noise versus natural birdsong on the mood and cognitive performance of participants. The study was published in October, in the journal Scientific Reports.

The study showed that brief exposure to birdsong reduced anxious and paranoid states in healthy subjects, independent of whether the birdsong came from two different or more different bird species. "The presence of birdsong may be a subtle indicator of an intact natural environment, signaling a vital, biologically valuable and threat-free safe space for humans," Stobbe added.

Source: The Birding Community e-Bulletin November 2022

You can access all past E-Bulletins on the National Wildlife Refuge Association website:
https://www.refugeassociation.org/birding-community-e-bulletin

CHAPTER NEWS

BIRDING KINGSPORT'S August program featured Robert Miles, District Conservationist with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (Tennessee). He discussed the NRCS in detail and how they address resource concerns and wildlife conservation.

We had a bird walk in early September at Laurel Run Park in Hawkins County as a follow-up for folks who attended the Fun Fest bird walks we hosted during this summer's annual celebration. Laurel Run Park is set along the beautiful and serene Holston River and was the backdrop for the 1984 movie, *The River*, starring Mel Gibson and Sissy Spacek.

The Kingsport Chapter of TOS hosted the fall meeting September 30-October 2. It was an enjoyable weekend with good food, an educational paper session, and featured our guest speaker, Paco Madrigal from Cotinga Tours in Costa Rica. Even the weather cooperated in most areas for our bird walks on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Thanks to everyone who travelled to East Tennessee to join us!

Leadership Team

The **BRISTOL BIRD CLUB** (BBC) has been active since our last report. Our club sponsored several walks to a favorite local park (Jacobs Nature Park) during the fall migration. Some great finds were Prairie Warblers, Northern Waterthrush, Cape May Warblers, American Redstarts, Gray-cheeked Thrushes, Swainson's Thrushes, and Philadelphia Vireos. Several walks were sponsored, both morning and evening, and we want to thank everyone who dedicated their time to leading these walks. Especially Rob Biller who organized the walks.

Another outing in late August, held at the Little Biscuit Mini Farm and sponsored by Larry McDaniel and Janet Brown, was "Nighthawks and Hotdogs". This outing was a huge success! We were treated to hotdogs and all the fixings, and also Common Nighthawks were observed flying overhead. We were also able to tour the mini-farm and all the animals there. It was a fun outing.

The BBC was involved in Wildlife Weekend at a local Park, Steele Creek Park in Bristol. Many thanks to

Kingsport Chapter TOS Fall Meeting group picture taken by Belinda Bridwell

CHAPTER NEWS

Bristol - *Continued from Page 8*

Michelle Sparks who was greatly involved in organizing this event. It is simply amazing how many people offer their talents to create activities for children that afford opportunities for them to learn about wildlife. A bird walk was conducted and also bird banding. Thanks to all who helped make this a great event.

Our annual banquet was held at the Addilynn Methodist Church. They did a great job preparing our food and decorating for the occasion. We had good attendance, the food was fantastic, and door prizes were organized for all attendees. Our speaker was Belinda Bridwell, who is a great photographer. and who has won several "best in show" awards in local photography contests. Her topic was "How to Make a Good Bird Photograph". Her talk included sone of the technical aspects of cameras and equipment, but also showcased some of her wonderful photos. The talk was both informative and her photographs were spectacular. We thoroughly enjoyed the evening.

We are looking forward to some great outings during the fall and winter season. Hope to see you there!

Debi Campbell, Secretary

The **KNOXVILLE CHAPTER** has resumed in-person meetings and continues to lead field trips and be part of local events. Club members participated in and had a table display at the annual Hummingbird Festival at Ijams Nature Center, Knoxville on August 13. In September, the club held its annual Fall potluck dinner at The Cove at Concord Park, Knoxville and had a great turnout. Several club members had a great time helping 60-70 second and fifth graders at Clayton-Bradley Academy's Pistol Creek Day "Discover Birds" on October 19; kids will talk birds if you give them a chance!

Participation from club members on field trips throughout the area have been great during late summer and fall. Field trips have been held at Norris Songbird Trail, Rankin Bottoms, Cove Lake State Park, Seven Islands State Birding Park, Foothills Parkway, The Cove at Concord Park, Gupton Wetlands, Heritage Center Greenway Powerhouse Trail, and Kyker Bottoms. New field trip coordinator Sheila Rygwelski is actively recruiting leaders for more trips to add to the calendar.

The annual Knox County Fall Bird Count was held on September 25. Compiler Dean Edwards reported preliminary results included more than 115 species including 3 species new to the count (Eared Grebe, Laughing Gull, and Connecticut Warbler). Programs at monthly club meetings so far this Fall season have included Dean Turley on managing property for native vegetation to attract and benefit birds, and Dawson Rader presenting his graduate research on Swainson's Warblers in the Appalachian Mountains of Tennessee. Chuck Estes will present the December program on birding in south Texas.

KTOS and TOS lost a good one on July 15th. Jim Campbell passed away at the age of 93. Jim was a former president of the Knoxville chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society and former vice president and board member of the statewide Tennessee Ornithological Society, where he was awarded the Distinguished Service Award in 1996. He birded in 49 states of the US, all the Canadian provinces and all 95 counties of the State of Tennessee. Bird song identification was his main interest, and many Knoxville birders have fond memories of being in the field with him and being amazed by his "good ears". He was pleasant to be with, a real gentleman, and he greatly enjoyed sharing his birding knowledge with experienced and novice birders alike. In later years he could be found in the spring on Sharps Ridge, driving slowly with the windows down to listen to his beloved birds. He led hundreds of birding walks and events all over the country on behalf of the National Park Service, National Wildlife Federation, University of Tennessee, and the Dogwoods Arts Festival. He will be (is) missed.

Current KTOS officers are President, Chris Welsh; Vice-President, Dean Turley; Treasurer, Dawn Headrick and Secretary, Stephanie Mueller.

Submitted by: Stephanie Mueller and Chris Welsh

CHAPTER NEWS

The **MEMPHIS CHAPTER** of the TOS enjoyed two interesting presentations at our monthly meetings in September and October. Much to the delight of our membership, our meetings have returned to St. George's Episcopal Church in Germantown. We are indeed grateful for their gracious hospitality.

In September, Dr. Kelly Miller, who recently obtained her PhD at the University of Memphis, presented her doctoral research, "Experimental alteration of male parental care reveals benefits of pairing with good fathers in a wild bird population." Dr. Miller expressed her appreciation to the TOS for a grant which helped fund her research, addressing mating proclivities based on male wing length of Prothonotary Warblers. We are proud of the fact that Dr. Miller and her associates at the University of Memphis are active members in our chapter.

In October, chapter member Allen Sparks, an avid avian photographer, presented a slideshow depicting images of diverse bird species from Sanibel Island, Florida. The observation was made that there are those that take pictures, those that photograph, and those that are true artists who perfect their craft. Allen is indeed exemplary of the latter. As a result of the tragic hurricane which impacted Sanibel Island this year, Allen discussed that devastation and provided existing resources available to assist in the recovery of both habitat and wildlife.

Dick Preston reviewed the results of recent chapter field trips and referenced recent local sightings of interest which included a one-day wonder Scissor-tailed flycatcher as well as a Clay-colored Sparrow, and an Ibis, inconclusively thought to be of the White-faced variety.

Melissa McMasters photographed what she initially believed to be a late-date Great Crested Flycatcher on October 17 at the Marsh of Shelby Farms (see eBird listing / photos). The images created considerable debate among the illuminati of birding, who opined that it was most likely an Ash-throated Flycatcher. If so, it would represent only the third historical record of the species in Shelby County and the first since 2012.

The 2023 TOS Spring meeting is in Nashville and Memphis chapter participation was strongly encouraged. Additionally, Dick reviewed the Recovering America's Wildlife Act (S.2372), pending legislation before the U.S. Senate, and urged everyone to contact their elected officials regarding support of the same.

The Memphis chapter continues to experience robust membership growth and enthusiastic participation. It is apparent that a beneficial aspect of the COVID pandemic is in a renewed interest in the outdoors, conservation, and the welfare of wildlife in general.

Jim Varner, President

It has been a busy Fall for the **NASHVILLE CHAPTER**. We hosted our 43rd consecutive year of Wednesday morning migration walks at Radnor Lake State Park with four fall walks that were attended by over 100 people collectively. Best news was that all four of our leaders were new volunteers! We would like to thank Shelley Smith, Finn Goodwin-Bain, Stacy Elliott, and Jackie Corbin for doing a great job. Our spring walks will begin on Wednesday April 19, 2023, and run thru May 10th. Join us!

Mike Smith (Field trip coordinator) and Susie Russenburger (Program coordinator) continue to plan and execute wonderful birding field trips and fantastic educational programs for our meetings. Many thanks to both for their ongoing efforts.

We had a great Fall bird count on September 24th. Many thanks to Barbara Harris for coordinating, to Scott Block for compiling and to all those who participated. Our two Audubon Christmas Bird Counts are set for December 17th (land count) and January 1st (lake count). Join us if you are in the area. Contact me for additional details – routledges@bellsouth.net

Many thanks to the Kingsport Chapter for a wonderful Fall meeting. The venue, the field trips, the food, and the speaker on Saturday night added up to a memorable and terrific time. It is always great to be in the Smokey Mountains in the fall with good friends.

Cyndi Routledge, President

CHAPTER NEWS

The **HIGHLAND RIM CHAPTER** (HRC) September Pontoon boat cruise was cancelled due to weather; however, we were still able to hold our meeting in a covered retreat and rejoice in the return of Kerry after his unexpected heart surgery. A few of our members were able to enjoy the hawk watch at Sewanee and they shared their sightings with the rest of us in the club.

Our October meeting was held at the home of Marie and Kerry Syler. We had the opportunity to pick muscadines from Kerry and Marie's vineyard. What a relaxing and fun way to enjoy the beautiful weather we were blessed with. After enjoying the outdoors, meal, and fellowship we had the pleasure of hearing about Bluebirds. Our guest speaker for our program was Don Hazel, President of the Tennessee Bluebird Society. *Bluebirds: An American Success Story*, was our topic and we were well informed about Bluebirds, their history and future. With Don's help we were able to give the Winchester Boy Scout Troop 184 correct dimensions for our Bluebird houses.

In November we visited Taylor's Creek Greenway in Estill Springs to map and finalize our Bluebird trail. Taylor's Creek Greenway is a beautiful nature and walking area. Our trail will start small with twelve houses with the capacity to add more at a later date.

We will end our year with our annual Christmas Banquet and participate in the Christmas bird count in December.

Janie Denis, Secretary

Barbara West (Hart) Wilson

The Memphis chapter lost Barbara Wilson, a dear friend and member, on November 5, 2022.

Barbara was active in TOS for nearly 40 years and was involved in numerous nonprofit organizations in Memphis. These include the Wolf River Conservancy, Memphis Interfaith Association, and the Memphis Arts Festival, an event which she assisted in founding. Barbara made many birdwatching trips over her life. She had a deep love and concern for conservation and was a kind and friendly presence at chapter meetings and field trips. Barbara completed high school and college in California, met her husband Rich during World War II when she was working in Hawaii, and they then moved to Memphis in the 1940s.

A celebration of life service was held at her church, The Church of the Holy Communion (Episcopal) on November 17.

Barbara's 101 years of life were dedicated to the service of others and to maintaining our planet for future generations. The Wilson family asks that donations be made to MIFA and the Wolf River Conservancy.

In Memoriam

Larry F. Routledge

On September 28, 2022, we lost my father and long-time birding enthusiast, Larry Routledge, following an extended illness. Dad and Mom discovered the passion of birding after fellow birder, Rick Knight, gave an informative and entertaining talk to an interested group in Greeneville, Tennessee in the mid 1980's. Being recent empty nesters and longing for a new direction, they enthusiastically joined TOS and became active in the Greeneville chapter. The entire birding community of TOS provided the perfect outlet for them for over forty years. While they enjoyed the birding, they especially enjoyed the birders that they met along the way. They continued to foster friendships that would last the rest of their lives and continues with Mom even to this day.

Since they both enjoyed the TOS community so much, they often invited Cyndi and me to join them at the state meetings. At that time of our lives, we were busy with our kids, jobs, school, and life in general, so we usually declined. "One of these days!" I would say. Even so, they continued to invite us over the years, until one day I took them up on their offer. One meeting in the mid 1990's (Columbia? Manchester? Susan McWhirter was president, I remember that much) I finally took them up on their offer. I was hooked. I attended a few more meetings over the years and became more and more active. Cyndi gathered an interest also, and decided to join me at a meeting in Nashville in the mid-2000's. Now we were both hooked. Ever since that day, we have both stayed active in NTOS and TOS, and Cyndi has since then started SEAR, her birding research non-profit. The rest is history.

I think it is fair to say that Dad was a good birder, an above average birder, but not an overwhelmingly spectacular birder. But what he certainly was, in my opinion, was a warm, witty, funny, and most enjoyable birding companion; one of the best. I will admit right now that there were a couple of TOS Board meetings I skipped, though I was present, so I could spend more of the afternoon birding with him. Honestly, I don't regret it one bit.

Such is one of life's funny peculiarities. One's gently repeated invitations over the years finally connected and when it did, it brought untold joy to both Cyndi and me. It continues to do so to this day. Thanks, Dad, for your loving companionship over the years. We will all miss you very much.